

REMARKS

Claims 6, 13, 16, 79, and 84 are cancelled without prejudice, and claims 1, 3, 21, 22, 39, 48, 51, 52, 64, 66, 68, 78, 83, and 86 are currently amended. Claims 95-103 have been newly added. Claims 1-5, 7-12, 14, 15, 17-27, 39-46, 48-66, 68-78, 83, 86-89, and 95-103 are now pending in the application. In addition, proposed drawing changes are enclosed, and the specification has been amended to be consistent with the proposed drawing changes. The Abstract has also been amended. Applicant respectfully requests reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant has amended the Abstract and asserts that the objections to the Abstract have been overcome. A clean copy of the Abstract as amended has been provided on a separate sheet of paper attached to this Amendment.

The drawings have been objected to. Applicant encloses proposed changes to the first sheet of drawings. The proposed changes change the numbering of original figure 1 to Figure 1A but otherwise do not change that figure. The proposed changes also add new Figure 1B, which is a side, cross-sectional view of Figure 1A. New Figure 1B shows an exemplary embodiment of column elements 112 and protruding member 120 in which each is formed of a core wire 190, 194 that is over coated 192, 196. No new matter has been introduced, as the specification already referred to such exemplary embodiments of the column elements 112 and the protruding member 120. The support in the specification for new Figure 1B should be apparent from the amendments to the specification, which make the specification consistent with the proposed drawing changes. Applicant asks the Examiner to approve the enclosed proposed changes to sheet one of the drawings.

Applicant traverses the objection to the drawings with respect to claims 51, 55, 70, and 71. Initially, Applicant notes that the drawings illustrate non-limiting examples. Moreover, more than just Figures 5A and 5B support claims 48-66. For example, Figures 7A and 7B show an example of a beam whose base portion 404 is mounted to a substrate and whose beam 402 "extends away" from the substrate. Terminals 218 and 222 are shown in Figure 5A and expressly described as optionally joined. (See specification page 15, lines 9-13, and specification page 11, lines 2-4.) Tips and tip structures mounted on a beam are shown throughout the drawings (e.g., elements 130, 132, 134 of Figure 1), and Figure 6 illustrates an exemplary electronic device 348, which, as stated in the specification, may be a capacitor. Thus,

an illustrative example in the figures can be found in the figures for each of the features described in claims 51, 55, 70, and 71. Applicant therefore requests that the objection to the drawings with respect to those claims be withdrawn.

Claims 55, 62-64, 66, and 78-89 have been rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph as allegedly unclear. Applicant has amended claims 64, 66, and 78 to address the Examiner's concerns, and Applicant has include the correct copy of claim 84. Applicant asserts that the rejection of claims 64, 66, 78, and 84 has been overcome.

Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 55, 62, 63, 79-83, and 85-89 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, on the grounds that a prima facie case that any of those claims is unclear has not been set forth. As set forth in MPEP, section 2171, the requirements of the second paragraph of 35 USC § 112 are that (1) the claims describe what the inventor believes to be the invention, and (2) the metes and bounds of the claimed subject matter are reasonably ascertainable. It is unclear to Applicant whether the Examiner is asserting that any of claims 55, 62, 63, 79-83, and 85-89 does not meet one of those requirements, and if so, why the claims allegedly do not meet the requirement. Certainly, that one particular figure allegedly does not illustrate a feature set forth in a claim is not grounds for rejecting the claim under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. Therefore, applicants request that either (1) the rejection of claims 55, 62, 63, 79-83, and 85-89 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn, or (2) the rejection be explained by identifying which of the two requirements of 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, is allegedly not met and why the requirement is not met, as set forth in MPEP sections 2171-2173.05(v).

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-12, 14-27, 39-46, and 68-77 are allowable, and claim 60 contains allowable subject matter. Applicants have amended some of those claims to clarify the language. Applicants assert that the claims remain allowable.

Claims 48-59 and 61-66 have been rejected as unpatentable over Japanese patent document 04-214650 to Kawahara ("Kawahara") and also in view of USP 4,615,573 to White et al. ("White"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Independent claim 48 now describes the protruding member as extending from the beam between the tip and the base and further as extending from a surface of the beam that is opposite the surface on which the tip is located. Kawahara's element 2 does not show or suggest such a protruding member, and White fails to disclose any type of protruding member extending from

finger 14. Therefore, independent claim 48 and its dependent claims 49-59 and 61-66 patentably distinguish over Kawahara and White.

Claims 78, 79, 83, 84, and 86-89 have been rejected as unpatentable in view of one or more of the following: USP 4,220,389 to Schell ("Schell"), USP 6,307,392 to Soejima et al. ("Soejima"), USP 3,891,924 to Ardezzone et al. ("Ardezzone"), USP 5,307,311 to Sliwa, Jr. ("Sliwa"), USP 5,228,866 to Espenshade et al. ("Espenshade"), USP 4,976,629 to Werner ("Werner"), and USP 4,811,246 to Fitzgerald, Jr. et al. ("Fitzgerald").

Independent claim 78 now includes "an adjustable device disposed under said beam providing a stop for said beam that is adjustable between at least two different positions." None of the cited references teaches or suggests a "microelectronic spring structure" having such a device. For example, the pressure device in Schell does not provide a stop for contact 13 that is adjustable between at least two different positions. Ardezzone's screw 42 merely lifts the elevation of arm 62. Sliwa's fusible material 46 likewise fails to meet the limitations of claim 78. Espenshade, Werner, and Fitzgerald similarly fail to teach or suggest the adjustable device now recited in claim 78. Therefore, independent claim 78 and its dependent claims 79, 83, 84, and 86-89 patentably distinguish over the cited references. 6-17

As a final note, the modified form 1449 form listing 11 references cited in an Information Disclosure Statement mailed September 12, 2002 has not been returned. Applicant requests an initialed copy of the form 1449.

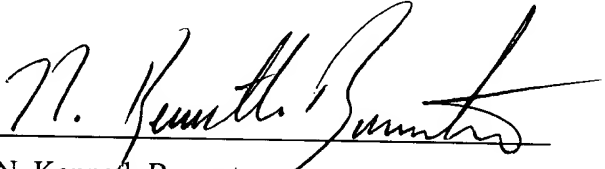
In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicants' attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (925) 456-3915.

Although Applicant believes that all necessary extensions of time and fees have been provided for, Applicant petitions the Director for any extension of time deemed necessary for acceptance of this paper, and Applicant authorizes the Director to charge any fee deemed necessary for acceptance of this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-0285 (order no. P134-US).

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 21, 2003

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